

# Employee's Suggestion Could Save Cabinet Over \$100,000

Congratulations to Roy Rice, D-11 Roadside Environmental District Administrator, who won \$2,500 for his suggestion to plant low growing fescue around guardrails and eliminate spraying. Crews presently spray once or twice a year to keep guardrails visible to motorists for safety concerns. Plantings such as "Hard Fescue" can be used in these areas and tend to thrive in harsh conditions, not particular to soil and remain green all year as frost/freezing doesn't affect. Using this type of grass will significantly reduce herbicide applications which are expensive and time consuming as well as exposing our workers to traffic hazards. Minimal disturbance around guardrails is another benefit as a very strong base to withstand traffic impacts is imperative.

Based on an estimate of 3000 miles of guardrail treated

annually, statewide, approximately 50% could be converted to this permanent vegetative cover. At a cost of 2 cents per linear foot, approximately \$150,000 could be realized in savings each year. Once established it would prevent erosion, hinder weed growth and improve the aesthetics of the roadside. This type of vegetation would have beneficial effects on safety, the environment, aesthetics and public relations.

This type of fescue is also an ideal grass for lawns, for those of us who are tired of mowing. Places such as cemeteries would only require maintenance once or twice a year using this type of ground cover.

District 11 is proud to have one of our employees receive compensation for their suggestion. We encourage any employee to submit suggestions that would provide a cost savings and benefit everyone.

